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village as well as a farming centre, and boats are numerous 226
and well made. What may be called in-shore fishing from small boats is usually done with tame cormorants, which are trained to catch the fish, but prevented from swallowing them by a ring round the neck, The fisherman punts his boat along the shallow shore surrounded by his flock of cormorants, perhaps ten or twelve birds, which seize the fish disturbed by the passage of the boat. The cormorants are never allowed to feed themselves by catching fish when the ring is removed, but are fed by hand in the boat ; damaged fish, small fry, and shell fish—a kind of fresh water cockle—being used for their food. Fish caught by cormorants is always cheaper than that caught in nets because the birds have damaged it to some degree and it will not keep. Wild cormorants, plentiful on the Erh Hai, can never be tamed for fishing, and the tame ones are bred in captivity.

Off-shore fishing with nets is more paying than cormorant fishing because larger fish can be caught; they are not damaged by the birds' beaks, and can be kept alive in a barrel or tank till brought to market. This is a considerable industry on the lake, but is mostly in the hands of families from the villages of the eastern shore where there is little or no rice land. The fishing families live permanently on their large [342]
boats, fifty feet long by eight feet in the beam, although they often have some property in one of the villages of the eastern shore.

A Min Chia village, even when part of the population en- [361]
gages in fishing, is essentially a cluster of farms. There are no 443
shops in the village, and no trades are carried on there except boat building in one or two of the villages on the east side of the lake, where the poor soil is quite inadequate to support a farming population. When the villager wishes to make purchases he either goes into the city or waits for a market day, when the traders come out to an open air market

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443 held on fixed days at one or other of a few large villages. Equally, all produce is sold either daily on the streets of Ta Li, or at the large fortnightly fairs in the city and the smaller markets held every six days in one of these market villages. Commerce is thus not part of the activity of the village as such, and it will be convenient to describe the character and scope of Min Chia trade in a separate chapter.

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312 As the city lies at the foot of the high Ts'ang Shan range there is an abundant water supply. Small streams led off from the mountain torrents have been conducted into the city by tunnels under the walls and flow swiftly by the side of the lanes across the city from west to east. They are used as power for water mills, for washing clothes, and for irrigation, drinking water being obtained from numerous wells.

361 In the eastern half of the enclosure, where streams wind along among groves of willows, and farmhouses lie hidden among large shade trees and clumps of bamboo, the visitor is surprised, on seeing the city wall, to find that among these rural surroundings he is still within the city itself. Indeed, seen from a high point on the mountain, Ta Li with its creeper-clad walls and the dense groves of trees in the gardens looks more like a wood than a city, a huge walled garden set in the wide spaces of green, watery rice fields.

633 438 This rural character is well suited to a town which is in fact entirely dependent on agriculture for its commerce and industries. The primary function of a small city such as Ta Li is to provide a market for the peasants and to act as a distributing point for the goods which the farming population need. It is also a centre where the richer families can live in a security which the open country did not always afford; where the schools, law courts, government offices and the headquarters of an important military command. But though the apparatus of government gives an urban air to the town and nourishes a small trade in books, and other articles used by the educated minority, the rice standard really rules the city just as surely as it does the country village. The commerce of Ta Li depends on the price of rice and the industries cater for the needs of the peasants.

369 443 The interdependence between town and country is not confined to trade, for the inhabitants of the town itself are largely farmers who also have homes in the country villages.

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The Min Chia townsmen are in fact really members of families who are landowners in the country, while many of the richer merchants have invested their profits in land and become landlords, and moneylenders, in the villages. These families with rural and urban connections can be classified broadly into three groups. Firstly there are small farmers whose land is not sufficient to support the whole family, and who have opened little shops in the city to supplement their incomes. They usually engage in trades such as tailoring, selling ready made clothes, or keep small tobacco shops which also sell straw sandals, string, fruit, and sweetmeats, in other words things which can be made by the women of the family itself and do not require capital. The turnover of such shops is very small, but the women can supply most of the stock and attend to the shop at the same time.

A family named Yang, pronounced "Ya" by the Min Chia are typical of this class. Min Chia by speech and descent they are the younger collateral branch of a widespread family, the senior branch of which is considered wealthy by Ta Li standards. They are thus connected by marriage with most of the well to do families in the city and neighbourhood, both "Chinese" and Min Chia. As is often the case at present, the original holding of land has been sub-divided on the death of the senior members of the last generation so that the share of the land belonging to this branch is only ten *mu*, or less than two acres. They had further suffered, in common with most of their neighbours, very heavy losses when their home, in one of the lake-side villages, was burnt and wrecked by the earthquake of 1925. The parents are both living, but the father, now elderly, suffers from some internal complaint, and is an invalid. There are three sons and one daughter. Two of the sons are adult, and therefore married, the daughter, though now eighteen years old, has not yet married, but will be within a year. The youngest son

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565 is a schoolboy. This family although now very hard pressed
369 for money belongs to the educated class, and therefore all the
423 sons have been given education up to the middle school
443 grade, and are of course literate in Chinese. The eldest has for some years been a school teacher, in China a very respected and honourable, but badly paid profession, the second son, who is married to the daughter of a much wealthier family, is a secretary in the office of the Garrison Headquarters.

Their land is worked by an uncle, his son and the wives, while the old mother assisted by her daughter (still unmarried), and by the elder sons in their spare time, keeps a tailoring shop in the city which also sells a few ready made clothes. Behind this shop they have a very small town house, but half the family is always in the country village by the lake, and other members constantly come and go, sometimes every day, between the two homes, which are three miles apart. There is of course no other means of transport except walking, unless a mule or a litter is hired, an extravagance which they would not undertake unless in case of sickness. As both the elder sons already have families of young children, and there are only two members of the family gainfully employed (if the microscopic salaries of a teacher and a clerk can be so described), this family is hard pressed. During the planting season and at harvest not only the wives, but also the sons go out and help on the land, and though no stigma attaches to educated people doing rough farm work, it is not usual for them to do it unless the necessity is great.

565 The second class of family with city and village homes is
369 composed of wealthy farmers who live in the city for com-
423 fort. The Wang family, related to the Yangs just discussed,
647 are of this class. The second of the Yang sons is married to a younger daughter of the Wang family, whose land and

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shop sells a few imported goods, some tailors also sell ready made clothes. To avoid duplicating the numbers the shops have been listed by their main line of goods. Some of the trades need a word of explanation. Marble shops are those that sell the Ta Li marbles cut into plaques, "pictures in stone" for decorative purposes. Mixed imported goods include such diverse things as socks made in Shanghai, electric torches, vacuum flasks, mirrors, rubber shoes, soap, scent, aluminium pots and pans, padlocks, combs, penknives and fountain pens, and other similar light industrial products, mostly coming either from Shanghai or Germany and, before the war, from Japan.

Paper images are made to be burned in the funeral procession and are not usually kept in stock, being made to order when required. The restaurants and tea houses, very numerous as they are, can be divided into those that provide full meals and those which only sell tea and light refreshments such as sweetmeats. Tobacconists, usually very small shops, also sell locally made coarse soap, matches, string, and straw sandals, the latter article being in constant demand as they are worn by all peasants and muleteers and do not last very long. Wine and salt shops sell these commodities under license, as wine is taxed and salt is a government monopoly. They also sell pepper and some articles of food such as scones and sweetmeats.

The large number of hatters and shoemakers is explained by the fact that Ta Li is a centre for the manufacture of these articles which are sent to other towns in western Yunnan and to the local markets and country fairs. These are the only industries which cater for a wider market than the immediate locality of Ta Li itself. With the exception of a few lines of foreign goods sold by the mixed goods shops all the articles for sale are either made locally or imported from other parts of China. Thus the silks come from Shanghai and

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the manufacturing towns of Kiangsu. Since the fall of Shanghai these have had to be imported with some difficulty via Hong Kong and Canton, and more recently via French Indo-China. In consequence stocks were falling and prices rising at the end of 1938. Medicine shops do not handle western types of medicine. Their stocks include many kinds of herbs, and also highly valued medicaments of doubtful curative value such as deer and rhinoceros horn, powders made of fossil bones, and various minerals. This business is very lucrative and the owners of the medicine shops are among the richest merchants in the city. Much of their raw material is brought from the Tibetan marches and from the unadministered forest tracks of northern Burma. Chinaware, by which is meant porcelain, is imported from the famous potteries in Kiangsi. This ware is used by the wealthy; a local very much cheaper pottery from Yung Pei in northern Yunnan is sold at the fortnightly markets in great quantities.

The shops in the city thus provide a fairly wide range of better class goods, but for food supplies and the articles of everyday use the population depends on the daily markets and the fortnightly fairs. Apart from the butchers there are no shops selling produce in the city. Vegetables, fish, rice, and grain are sold daily in the street markets which open about ten o'clock in the morning, when the peasants reach the city, and are usually over by four in the afternoon, when the country people set off for the villages before darkness can overtake them on the way.

The fortnightly "great markets" are held on the second and sixteenth of every lunar month on open spaces inside the north and south gates respectively. These fairs in fine weather attract very large numbers of people from the country and even from districts distant three days journey. During the morning all roads and paths leading towards the city are thronged with peasants and traders, women being

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quite as numerous as men. Some of the goods sold are brought from districts fifty and more miles away, and, especially in the winter months, some Tibetan horse dealers are sure to come down with ponies to sell. By mid-day the market is fully open. Booths are set up in long lines for the sale of silks, and other goods which would be damaged by the sun, temporary restaurants and tea houses do a thriving trade, while the air is rent with the shrill screaming of innumerable pigs, tugging and straining at the ropes which secure them by the hind legs. Elsewhere pottery, bamboo brooms, brass and copper ware from Li Chiang, fruit from the eastern shore of the lake, mats from Mi Tu, and a line of booths gay with the peasant embroideries made by the Min Chia women, attract a crowd of customers and idlers.

Bargaining is keen and shrewd. No one buys anything until every vendor has been visited, his wares priced, cheapened, and compared, and finally, after many return visits, when the price has been lowered by a nickel or two at most, the sale is made. Traders complain that now the crowds come more to see than to buy, and they regret the old days when opium was still grown. Some of the wares offered for sale are surprising. Carved doors and staircases for houses ready made and apparently of a standard size, are made in Hsi Chou north of Ta Li and offered for sale at these markets, to which they are brought fifteen miles on the backs of girls and men. There are the parrot sellers, whose "wares", small green parrots which are found wild in many parts of Yunnan, sit serenely, untied and tame, upon a large wooden frame of perches, carried on the vendor's shoulders. On the edge of the market, squatting on the ground, the Tibetan horse dealers, in their leather knee boots, with grimy bare chests, and long, matted, lousy hair, sit aloof and alien, watching their mounts, and the Mohammedan muleteers who come to look them over. Towards mid-day a long line of Min Chia

THE TOWER OF FIVE GLORIES

443 438 482 352 mid-day a long line of Min Chia Towards women with heavy pieces of wooden furniture, chests, benches and bed ends, on their backs, stagger slowly on to the fair ground. With the weight taken by a band round the forehead they have carried these loads from Chien Ch'uan and Ho Ch'ing, more than sixty miles to the north, and even for unladen men a three days' journey over the mountains.

443 438 323 435 415 Not far from the furniture sellers the pottery of Yung Pei, a town in the High Yang Tze valley one hundred miles to the north, is displayed. No pottery is made on the Ta Li plain, and apart from the Kiangsi ware used by the rich, all the pottery used comes from these Yung Pei kilns. Here one may see a cheap blue and white porcelain, mainly rice bowls, and a wide variety of earthenware vessels many of which reproduce in this coarse material the lovely shapes admired by connoisseurs in old Chinese porcelain. There are also the brittle, black clay cooking vessels from the district of Ma Kai south east of Ta Li, which are made from clay containing a high proportion of graphite, and are fire resisting. These cooking vessels, which sell for a few nickel in Ta Li, and for less than a nickel apiece in the district where they are made, almost entirely replace metal pots and pans for cooking. The only iron ware used in cooking are the large shallow cauldrons in which rice is cooked. These, too, are made in a neighbouring part of the province.

443 438 435 231 The busiest corner of the market is of course the produce section, where rice and vegetables are on sale, or are directly bartered for other commodities. Here the farmers can exchange one *tou* of rice for ten Chinese feet of cotton cloth of the standard width of one foot; and this is sufficient to make a complete suit of coat and trousers. A large part of the country produce brought to market consists of livestock, pigs, chickens, and some cattle. Horses are not in quite the same category as they are mainly used in the transport trade and the dealers are Chinese, Moslems or Tibetans. The price

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of pigs naturally depends on the age and quality of the animal, but 70 dollars Nickel, or fifteen shillings, is the usual price of a fat pig ready for slaughter. Pig bristles, which are one of the few local products which have a world market, fetch ten dollars Silver a catty, or about nine shillings for one and a quarter pounds weight. This is in Ta Li a high price, but it must be remembered that only the bristles along the spinal ridge of the pig are of any use, and the quantity obtained from one animal is not very large. Sheep, which, as has been pointed out, are not greatly valued or numerous, fetch about twenty dollars Nickel a head at most, as compared with seventy to eighty for a fat pig. Cattle, either for milking or draught, are a little more expensive, the prices ranging between twenty and thirty dollars Silver a head, or about fifteen shillings to one pound sterling. The price of a horse or mule varies a great deal, as there is a wide difference between the value of a pack pony and a good riding horse. Fifty dollars Silver, or about two pounds, is the lowest price, but a good mount may cost four times as much, and big, powerful mules bred on the Tibetan border, which can carry loads of two hundred catties (two hundred and fifty pounds), were selling for as much as four hundred dollars Silver or nearly £16 *os. od.* a head. It is true that this high price was paid by army buyers at the autumn fair in 1938, and is not normal.

Although the character of this market remains much the same throughout the year there are seasonal changes. Thus in the beginning of autumn large numbers of quilts and warm coats are offered for sale, and in the summer umbrellas, "rain cloth"—a kind of local oil cloth—and palm fibre rain cloaks worn by the farmers, are in great demand, for the Min Chia, like the Chinese, hate getting wet. Towards the end of the lunar year, when the great New Year settling day is approaching, the market becomes very busy,

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443 438 and in this month it is sometimes possible to find curios—usually of no value—which have been sold by some family in urgent need of funds. As a rule, however, the stock of the few merchants who sell curios, or secondhand objects of all descriptions, is as valueless as it is varied. Rusty swords, spearheads and daggers, are mixed up with bottles, tins, and cracked porcelain, cheap jade ornaments, silver bangles, an occasional broken bronze Buddha, and a quaint assortment of rubbish of European origin such as old table knives and forks, brass buttons of a Ghurka regiment, a battered English Grammar, or an old pair of opera glasses with the lenses missing. As an inspection of some European Curio shops "Chinese" wares shows equally well, the rubbish of one culture is a "curio" in another.

The fortnightly Ta Li market is thus essentially a means of exchanging local products, and not an occasion on which imported manufactured goods are sold in any quantity. On the other hand the two great annual fairs, the Third Month Fair held at Ta Li in the spring, and the Fish Pool Fair (Yu Tan Hui) held near Shang Kuan at the northern end of the plain, in the autumn, draw merchants from distant places to sell their wares, and afford the country people over a wide area an opportunity of buying the products of the coast and foreign countries. These two fairs, one in the brief slack season before the wheat is harvested and the rice planted, the other held just before the rice harvest, are timed to fit in with the programme of the farmers' year, so that the peasants can find leisure to travel some distance to attend them, when the weather is suitable. The Third Month usually corresponds fairly closely to the Solar April, before the monsoon breaks, and the Yu Tan Hui held in the Eighth Month, falls in the Solar month of September, when the rainy season is nearly over and the rains have in any case become sporadic and slighter.

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THE CITY OF GREAT PRINCIPLES

The Third Month Fair, *Sa Wa Dser* in Min Chia or *San Yueh Kai* to the Chinese is held on the 16th of the Third Lunar Month this being the traditional birthday of the Boddhisatva Kuan Yin (Avolekitesvara) and the official name (never used) for the Fair is "Kuan Yin Shih" the "Kuan Yin Fair". The Fair usually lasts about five days, the date of termination depending on the volume of business. It is famous all over Yunnan, and seems to be very ancient, as it is said to have been instituted by King Pi Lo ko of Nan Chao in the eighth century. To-day one is constantly told that business is far less than in former times, and the abolition of opium cultivation is always given as the reason. It is interesting to observe, however, that the same remark was made to one of the first European travellers to visit Ta Li, Archibald Colquhoun, who passed through Ta Li in 1882. It is true that this was only a few years[1] after the end of the great Moslem rebellion which devastated Yunnan in the seventies. In Colquhoun's time opium cultivation was still universal. It is generally agreed that the attendance of the public is as great as ever, but that the customers come to look and not to buy.

The fair is held outside the west gate of Ta Li city on a piece of open ground on the first uncultivated slopes of the Ts'ang Shan mountain, which also serves the purpose of a burial ground for executed criminals. Here, among the crude graves of these unhonoured dead, a little town of tents and booths, arranged in orderly streets, springs up on the day before the fair opens. These are the shops of the merchants of perishable goods, cloth, silk, imported mixed goods, and indeed all the trades represented in the streets of Ta Li itself. In addition there are many Cantonese merchants who have come for the fair itself with manufactured goods

[1] Across Chryse, Archibald Colquhoun. Vol. 2. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle and Rivington. London. 1883.

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

443 for sale, and there are the usual restaurant booths and tea
438 houses, always crowded, and serving excellent and tasty meals cooked on an improvised stove of stones and clay. At
278 least one half of the fair ground is occupied by the tents and
443 booths of the medicine merchants, for this fair is above all
438 famous as a market for drugs and herbs. The merchants, some of whom are from the marches of Tibet, bring enormous quantities of these goods to the Third Month Fair, which is attended by buyers representing the great medicine firms of the coastal cities and even of such distant places as Peking. The strange ingredients used in Chinese medicine, deer and rhinoceros horns, rare fungi from the forests of north Burma, the caterpillar plant (which, though really a seed pod, exactly resembles a caterpillar), tiger claws, and herbs which are probably possessed of more useful properties than these things, come very largely from the wild country of south west Yunnan and the great forests along the Yunnan Tibetan border ranges. Deer horns, believed to restore sexual potency, sell at the coast for as much as 5,000 National Currency dollars the pair (nearly £250 0s. 0d.) but they must be of a special kind, only found in the Burma-Yunnan borderland, and only those from the wild deer are valuable. The merchants state that the horn of the wild deer can be readily distinguished from horn of the same species reared in captivity.

443 These goods can of course be obtained for comparatively
438 low prices at the Ta Li fair, not far from their country of origin, and although the cost of transport to the coast is high, it is not difficult, comparing the cost and sale price, to understand why the Chinese medicine trade is one of the most profitable. The general merchandise imported for sale does not differ in character from that sold in the few mixed goods shops in Ta Li city, but the quality and range of the articles is superior. European or Shanghai piece goods, hats,

1: Fitzgerald II-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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hardware, and knitted woollen goods, especially for children, are most in demand, Some local specialities such as the hard wood carved furniture made near Teng Ch'uan north of Ta Li is also sold, but not in the quantity offered at the Yu Tan Hui in the autumn. 443 438

The horse market vies in importance with the drug and herb trade. Tibetan dealers come down to Ta Li in very large numbers for this fair, stopping on their way to the tea districts further south, for it is partly with the cash from the sale of their horses here that they buy the tea further south. With their wives and families they camp among the graves that cover the lower slopes near the fair ground, grazing their mules and ponies on the fresh spring grass. In order to show the merits of their horses a kind of "race meeting" is held on the third day of the fair, under the west wall of the city, where there is a stretch of flat ground, now further levelled to provide the "by pass" for the motor road which is planned to connect Ta Li with Li Chiang. The races are not competitive in the European manner, but consist of displays of horsemanship by one rider at a time. An official air is lent to the proceedings by the presence of the Magistrate of Ta Li and some of the officers of the garrison and other notables, who watch from a tent erected on a convenient mound. The horsemen, not all of whom are Tibetans, ride past the official tent at full gallop, and the points are awarded for the appearance of the horse, its paces, and the horsemanship of the rider. The winner is presented with a red silk flag inscribed with the official approbation, while the best of the other competitors get similar green flags. This flag is then pinned to the saddle of the horse, and the coveted distinction considerably enhances its value.

The general character of the Third Month Fair is thus not so much concerned with the wants of the farming population, the Min Chia themselves, as with purchase and sale of

1: Fitzgerald H-8 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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Yu T'an Hui (Fishpool) Fair.

Western Min Chia girl wearing her regional head-dress.

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[Face p. 64]

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443 438 the products of the border regions of Yunnan, for which Ta Li, near the junction of the main east and west and north and south caravan routes, is a convenient site. Held at the city itself it is convenient for the purchasers who have come from distant places and must lodge in the town inns. Although a large number of the peasants from the plain attend the fair, perhaps half those present are strangers from the north or east, or town merchants who come to replenish their stocks. It is this large outside element which has made the Third Month Fair well known to Chinese from other provinces and from Yunnanfu (K'un Ming) whereas the still larger fair of the autumn, the Yu Tan Hui, has not this character and is comparatively unknown even to residents in eastern Yunnan.

The Yu Tan Hui, or Fish Pool Fair, is so called because it is held on a rocky hillside overlooking the northern end of the Erh Hai lake, close to a temple where there was once a large fish tank (now dry). The site is curious, and in many ways inconvenient. There is no town nearer than Teng Ch'uan, which is five miles away, or the decayed fortress of Shang Kuan, distant only a mile, but reduced to a small village within its crumbling walls. Although there are other villages within easy walking distance of the Fair Ground, none of these have more than one or two small and dilapidated inns apart from the ordinary farmhouses of the village.

[487] On the other hand the site has good communications. The main north caravan road from Ta Li to Li Chiang and Tibet passes through the fair ground, and the branch road to Yung Pei, the pottery centre, crosses the Erh river estuary by a stone bridge at this point. Also the fair ground is on the shores of the lake, and the large junks can be moored in deep water against the rocky shore. If the customers were mainly merchants from distant places, as at the Third Month Fair, the inconvenience of the site would be considerable, but this fair is primarily for the country people, the Min Chia of

1: Fitzgerald.H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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443 the villages, and they either live within reach or are ready to
438 lodge in crowded farmhouses nearby.

The Fair is held on the 13th of the Eighth Month, a date corresponding in a normal year to 18th of September (1937) but if there is an intercalary month, the date falls later, as in 1938, when it was the 7th of October. In either case the rains are barely over, and in fact rain during the Fair is not uncommon. As the soil of the neighbourhood is red clay, the inconvenience caused by bad weather is considerable.

It is curious that this fair, where the accomodation is so limited, and the goods themselves only protected by flimsy tents of unwashed cotton cloth, should be held in a month where rain is certain and at a place so exposed. The only explanation is the fact that were it held later it would clash with the rice harvest, when the presence of the farmers would be impossible. The Yu Tan Hui is attended by immense crowds of people, nine tenths of whom are Min Chia farmers and their families, women being especially numerous. It continues for nine days on average, and is quite twice as large as the Third Month Fair. The streets of booths and tents cover a wide area on the hillside, nearly every shop in Ta Li, Teng Ch'uan, Chien Ch'uan, Hsia Kuan, and even further off places having its tent or stall. The customers are Min Chia farmers, but the vendors are the townsmen of the neighbouring cities, outside merchants being a minority.

The character of the fair and the goods sold are different from the Third Month Fair; here there are few medicine merchants, and fewer horses and Tibetan dealers, although in 1938, on the news that buyers from the Central Government Army were coming, large numbers of Tibetan mules were brought to the fair. Essentially however the Fair represents a reunion of all the merchants of the local cities at a site where their peasant customers can conveniently purchase city goods, and in exchange sell, not their farm pro-

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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duce, but the products of cottage industry, embroidery, needlework, carved furniture, coffin wood, building stone, leather work and wood work. As more than half the customers are women and girls, the goods offered for sale are largely such things as appeal to feminine needs and vanities.

A whole street of booths houses the silversmiths of Ta Li, Hsia Kuan and other small cities, and throughout the days of the fair this street is crowded with Min Chia girls in their embroidered best clothes, and picturesque silver studded headdresses. Here they can buy the silver ornaments which are sewn on to these caps—symbols of good luck and silver studs—and also bangles, apron holders and the silver chains complete with ear pick and needle case which Min Chia girls wear across the left shoulder.

Other streets of booths are devoted to hats—some Min Chia girls from the Erh Yuan district wear men's round skull caps decorated with coloured buttons—silk shops, and those selling knitted woollen children's clothes, a very popular attraction. But almost every shop has something intended for women or children, babies' toys, or the gay caps in the shape of tigers' heads which are favoured for baby boys. The carved hard wood furniture made near Teng Ch'uan[1] is here sold in large quantities. It is well made and substantial: the table tops cut from a single piece of wood may measure 3 ft. by 2 ft. 6 in. This furniture is perhaps the finest workmanship produced in the Min Chia area, though owing to the weight of the pieces and the difficulty of transport, it is only in the last few years that any of it has been taken even as far as K'un Ming.

[1] The wood used, which comes from further north, is called Hung Ch'un Mu, Red Ch'un wood. There are many kinds of Ch'un tree in Yunnan, but the red Ch'un is the largest and grows only at a great altitude, over 10,000 ft., as is commonly the case with all the large timber trees in Yunnan.

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505 house, while on others merchants recline upon the heaped
● 443 up packages and boxes which hold their goods.

438 In spite of the crowds and animation of the fair ground, merchants, as usual, complain that in recent years their
443 business has not been good. The farmers, they say cannot
438 afford to buy since opium cultivation was stopped, and now since the war with Japan began, the price of imported goods is still higher. In 1938 the merchants said that whereas the people would buy old stock, i.e. that purchased before the war and still sold at pre-war prices, there was practically no sale for new stock, purchased since the value of the Chinese dollar in relation to outside currencies dropped. It is indeed fairly obvious that most of the people came to see and be seen rather than to make more than one or two small purchases. The fair must always have been for the villagers as much a social as a commercial occasion. It offers to the women, and particularly to the girls, one of the few opportunities of seeing scenes of busy life, crowds of people, and of wearing their best clothes in public. This is clearly an important aspect of the matter to them, for at no other time or place is it possible to see so many Min Chia girls wearing their full costume, moving freely unattended through the crowds, making their own purchases, watching their friends or rivals do the same, modestly aware that their looks and costumes are being appraised by masculine eyes as well.

5:Graham E-5 (1933, 1941)1942 AE3 Sino-Tibetan
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Ch'iang

done in the houses or in Chinese temples or on the streets. Money may be paid, or exchange may be accomplished by means of barter. If two objects are bartered and they are of unequal value, the balance may be paid in cash or another object may be thrown in to make things even.

The principal market places are in the Chinese cities. Here the Ch'iang bring produce--firewood, corn, beans, wheat, buckwheat, pepper, walnuts fruit, vegetables, chickens, pork, mutton, eggs, hides, etc. With the money they purchase salt, cotton cloth, vegetable oil, and other commodities which they take home.

The interest paid on loans is very high. It varies from sixty or seventy to over three hundred per cent. This is one of the handicaps now faced by the Ch'iang. If the borrower does not pay, the lender sometimes sends a poor person to live in the home of the borrower and eat his food, smoke his tobacco, drink his tea, and sleep in his bed. This may cost the borrower a lot of money but in the end he must pay all the money owed, both capital and interest. He is not credited with what the poor man has cost him. Sometimes the lender comes and takes away a pig, a goat, or a cow. Often the interest is paid in corn. For a loan of one hundred dollars the yearly interest is from two to six dou or pecks of corn, so that the rate of interest depends on the market value of the corn.

3. Habitations and Villages.

The houses are built of unhewn stones plastered together with clay. Advantage is taken of the flat and smooth sides, so that the walls of the houses appear smooth, and the corners square. There are two or more stories. The first story consists of a small open court and rooms or pens for the domestic animals. The floors of the pens are covered with small twigs, grass, or straw, which are trend upon for weeks and mixed with the offal of the animals, and later is used for fertilizer. People live on the second floor where dogs, cats, chickens, and sometimes other domestic animals and fowls range. The roofs are flat, and at the rear of each roof is an open shed in which corn and other grains are stored, and where the women sometimes do their weaving. Similar stone houses are widely used in the highlands of western Szechwan, Si Kang, and eastern Tibet. On the roof the grain is dried, flailed and winnowed, and here in fair weather the inmates visit and look around at

Mewu

About one kilometer down the valley from this monastery city, a small market town arose, inhabited mainly by Mohammedans. Nine years ago the Chinese government made this the capital of the district of Hsia-ho. Li An-che 5) gives a detailed description of Labrang.

The Tibetans who live around Labrang are farmers. They grow Tibetan barley in the Hsia-ho Valley and its lateral valleys. If conditions are favorable, they also plant some wheat, as well as oats, peas, broad beans, rape and flax. They also raise yaks, sheep, goats, horses and pigs.

Not far south of Labrang the region of the high Tibetan steppe begins. Its southern boundary toward Hsik'ang and Szechuan is formed by the mighty Min-shan, a portion of the K'un-lun system. West of Labrang are the highlands of the Ch'inghai Province (Kokonor).

Above 3,000 meters vegetation gradually comes to an end, not, however, peasant settlements. Even in the treeless, flat, trough-shaped high valleys between 3,000 and 3,500 meters there are everywhere small villages of sedentary Tibetans. Here they grow Tibetan barley and oats, often the two crops mixed, as well as rape. With increasing altitude, cultivation gradually grows less, and from about 3,500 meters upward we find grassland inhabited only by stock farmers. (1)

1 Cf. Ekvall 4), page 29.

Although the Tibetans who live here are under Chinese administration, they are nevertheless very independent of the Chinese, and are not very much influenced by Chinese culture. They are divided into individual tribes, one of which (the Mewu-Fantzu) we shall describe more closely in the following account.

The territory of the Mewu-Fantzu lies south of the large lamasery of He-tso (2) and east of the "old" city of T'ao-chou. The tribe

2. Tafel 2) Vol. II gives a good illustration of the He-tso monastery

of the Mewu-Fantzu consists of sedentary as well as nomadic Tibetans. /8/

After I had lived in Labrang and He-tso for some time, I visited two monasteries belonging to the Mewu tribe: the old and the new Mewu monasteries (Mewu-chiu-szu and Mewu-hsin-szu). Then I pitched my tent 18 or 20 kilometers south of the latter monastery in a shallow valley of about 3,950 meters elevation. On the slope